1. Which character in this novel do you identify with the most? Why?
2. In the novel Nicholas suddenly finds himself responsible for an estate and tenants, a responsibility he neither expected or wanted. Have you ever had responsibility thrust upon you unexpectedly? What did you do?
3. Forgiveness is an important theme in this novel. Have you ever struggled to forgive someone? What helped you overcome unforgiveness?
4. As the daughter of a minister, Lavinia has heard many sermons, but the message of some have proved difficult to put into practice. Have you ever been challenged by a sermon? How did you respond?
5. If you could give Lavinia one piece of advice, what would it be? What advice would you give Nicholas?
6. In what ways have Lavinia and Nicholas changed through the novel? What do you consider to be the biggest factor(s) towards their change?
7. “Promises are mere words on the wind until something is actually done.” Do you agree with this statement? Why/why not?
8. Lavinia mentions her mother’s favourite Bible verse: 2 Timothy 1.7 “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of love, power, and a sound mind.” Do you have a favourite verse? How did it become your favourite?
9. While this is a work of fiction, certain true historical elements are included to help ‘ground’ the reader in the era, such as references to the Napoleonic War (the battle of Burgos, the charge at Garcia Hernandez), and Miss Farren (an actress from the 1700s who married the 12th Earl of Derby). Did you find such historical details interesting?
10. What did you consider the most appealing parts of the book?
11. What do you think happens next?